

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended): A perpendicular magnetic recording medium comprising:

a substrate;

at least one underlayer formed above the substrate; and

a perpendicular magnetic recording layer formed above the at least one underlayer, an easy magnetization axis of the perpendicular magnetic recording layer being oriented perpendicular to the substrate, the at least one underlayer has a granular structure including metal particles and grain boundaries surrounding the metal particles and the perpendicular magnetic recording layer including magnetic crystal particles and grain boundaries surrounding the magnetic crystal particles,

wherein the granular underlayer contains Ru as the metal particles and the grain boundaries of the metal particles contain silicon oxide and an oxide of at least one element selected from the group consisting of Li, Na, K, Rb and Cs

the magnetic crystal particles contain Co as the main component and further contain Pt and Cr and ~~wherein~~ the grain boundaries contain an oxide of silicon and an oxide of at least one element selected from the group consisting of Li, Na, K, Rb, and Cs, and

the ratio of a total amount of silicon oxide substance and at least one oxide of Si, Li, Na, K, Rb, and Cs in the granular underlayer perpendicular magnetic recording layer is no less than 1 mol% and no more than 20 mol%

wherein a ratio of total amount of one oxide of Li, Na, K, Rb, and Cs contained at the grain boundaries in the perpendicular magnetic recording layer is no less than 1 mol% and no more than 30 mol% based on the total moles of the oxides of silicon and Li, Na, K, Rb, and Cs contained at the grain boundaries.

2. and 3. (canceled).

4. (original): The perpendicular magnetic recording medium according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the at least one underlayer contains at least one element selected from the group consisting of Ru, Ti, Rh, Pt, Pd, and Ir as a main component.

5. (original): The perpendicular magnetic recording medium according to claim 1 wherein, at least one of the at least one underlayer is made of non-magnetic crystal particles containing at least one element selected from the group consisting of Ru, Ti, Rh, Pt, Pd, and Ir as a main component, and grain boundaries surrounding the non-magnetic crystal particles, and

the grain boundaries contain an oxide of at least one element selected from the group consisting of Si, Cr, and Ti.

6. (original): The perpendicular magnetic recording medium according to claim 5, wherein the grain boundaries in at least one of the at least one underlayer contain an oxide of silicon and at least one element selected from the group consisting of Li, Na, K, Rb, and Cs, ~~Ca, Sr, and Ba~~.

7. (currently amended): The perpendicular magnetic recording medium according to claim 6, wherein a ratio of total amount of oxides substance of Si, Li, Na, K, Rb, and Cs to an amount of silicon oxide, ~~Ca, Sr, and Ba~~ in the at least one underlayer is no less than 1 mol% and no more than 20 mol%.

8. (currently amended): The perpendicular magnetic recording medium according to claim 6, wherein a ratio of total amount of oxides substance of Li, Na, K, Rb, and Cs, ~~Ca, Sr, and Ba~~ contained at the grain boundaries in the at least one underlayer is no less than 1 mol% and no more than 30 mol%.

9. (withdrawn): A method for producing a perpendicular magnetic recording medium comprising the steps of:

forming at least one underlayer over a substrate, and

forming a perpendicular magnetic recording layer formed above the at least one underlayer by evaporating a material which contains an oxide of silicon and at least one element selected from the group consisting of Li, Na, K, Rb, Cs, Ca, Sr, and Ba, the perpendicular magnetic recording layer including magnetic crystal particles and grain boundaries surrounding the magnetic crystal particles.

10. (withdrawn): The method for producing a perpendicular magnetic recording medium according to claim 9, wherein the grain boundaries in the perpendicular magnetic recording layer contain an oxide of silicon and at least one element selected from the group consisting of Li, Na, K, Rb, Cs, Ca, Sr, and Ba.

11. (withdrawn): The method for producing a perpendicular magnetic recording medium according to claim 9, wherein the ratio of a total amount of substance of Si, Li, Na, K, Rb, Cs, Ca, Sr, and Ba in the perpendicular magnetic recording layer is no less than 1 mol% and no more than 20 mol%.

12. (withdrawn): The method for producing a perpendicular magnetic recording medium according to claim 9, wherein a ratio of total amount of substance of Li, Na, K, Rb, Cs, Ca, Sr, and Ba contained at the grain boundaries in the perpendicular magnetic recording layer is no less than 1 mol% and no more than 30 mol%.

13. (withdrawn): The method for producing a perpendicular magnetic recording medium according to claim 9, wherein the magnetic crystal particles contain Co as the main component and further contains Pt and Cr.

14. (withdrawn): The method for producing a perpendicular magnetic recording medium according to claim 9, wherein at least one of the at least one underlayer contains at least one element selected from the group consisting of Ru, Ti, Rh, Pt, Pd, and Ir as a main component.

15. (withdrawn): The method for producing a perpendicular magnetic recording medium according to claim 9, wherein

at least one of the at least one underlayer is made of non-magnetic crystal particles containing at least one element selected from the group consisting of Ru, Ti, Rh, Pt, Pd, and Ir as a main component, and grain boundaries surrounding the non-magnetic crystal particles, and the grain boundaries contain an oxide of at least one element selected from the group consisting of Si, Cr, and Ti.

16. (withdrawn): The method for producing a perpendicular magnetic recording medium according to claim 15, wherein a ratio of the oxide of at least one element selected from the group consisting of Si, Cr, and Ti at the grain boundaries in the at least one underlayer is no less than 1 mol% and no more than 20 mol%.

17. (withdrawn): The method for producing a perpendicular magnetic recording medium according to claim 15, wherein the grain boundaries in at least one of the at least one underlayer contain an oxide of silicon and at least one element selected from the group consisting of Li, Na, K, Rb, Cs, Ca, Sr, and Ba.

18. (withdrawn): The method for producing a perpendicular magnetic recording medium according to claim 17, wherein a ratio of total amount of substance of Li, Na, K, Rb, Cs, Ca, Sr, and Ba contained at the grain boundaries in the at least one underlayer is no less than 1 mol% and no more than 30 mol%.

19. (original): A magnetic read/write apparatus comprising the perpendicular magnetic recording medium according to claim 1 and a read/write head.

20. (original): The magnetic read/write apparatus according to claim 19, wherein the read/write head is a single magnetic pole recording head.